

**In the Specification:**

Please amend equation (2) on page 9, line 18, and the following text on lines 19-20, as follows:

$$\text{carbon dioxide evolution rate } (\mu\text{mol/h}) = (V \times 10^3 \times M/2) / (60t) \quad (t/60),$$

wherein  $M$  is the molarity of the alkaline concentration of the solution,  $V$  is a volume of the increment of the alkaline solution in milliliters, and  $t$  is the time increment in minutes.